

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 VIENTI 03579 211536Z

53

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

AID-05 FBO-02 SCS-03 SCCT-01 CCO-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07

L-02 NSC-05 SP-02 OC-05 OPR-02 PA-01 USSS-00 PRS-01

SCA-01 A-01 OMB-01 SS-15 SY-05 /087 W

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O R 211423Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 3970

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

CDR USSAG NKP IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL UDORN

DIA WASHDC

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 3579

CANBERRA FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY HABIB

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PINS, AEMR, LA

SUBJECT: PATHET LAO ACTIONS AGAINST USAID FACILITIES
IN VIENTIANE

REF: VIENTIANE 3573

1. FONMIN PHOUMI VONGVICHIT TELEPHONED CHARGE AT 1845
HOURS LOCAL TO STATE THAT, WITH CABINET MEETING STILL
GOING ON, JCCIA DELEGATION CHAIRMEN SOTH PHETRASY (LPF;
ALSO MINISTER OF ECONOMY AND PLAN) AND SOUKAN VILAYSARN
(VIENTIANE SIDE; ALSO VICE MINISTER OF RELIGION) HAD
"RESOLVED" SITUATION AT USAID/DAO COMPOUND EXCEPT FOR
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 VIENTI 03579 211536Z

AN "ARMED AMERICAN" WHO REFUSED TO LEAVE. (AT SAME

TIME MARINE GUARD WAS REPORTING ESTIMATED 200
DEMONSTRATORS STILL IN COMPOUND.)

2. CHARGE TOLD PHOUMI THIS WAS PRESUMABLY A REFERENCE
TO MARINE GUARDS WHO, QUITE PROPERLY, WERE REMAINING
AT POST UNTIL RELIEVED. CHARGE SUGGESTED, AND PHOUMI
AGREED, THAT TWO DELEGATION CHAIRMEN ACCOMPANY MISSION
REPRESENTATIVES TO COMPOUND TO SETTLE MATTER. (CHARGE
ALSO TOOK OCCASION TO REMIND PHOUMI OF UNRESOLVED
SITUATION AT KM 6 RESIDENTIAL AREA, WHICH LATTER SEEMED
TO HAVE FORGOTTEN.)

3. DELEGATION CHAIRMEN PLUS "BONUS" CABINET MEMBER,
MINISTER OF RELIGIONS MAHA KOU SOUVANNAMETHI (LPF),
ARRIVED AT CHANCERY 1900 HOURS TO DISCUSS PROPOSED TRIP
TO USAID COMPOUND. THE THREE MINISTERS TOLD CHARGE
THAT THEY HAD COME FROM CABINET MEETING. CABINET HAD
AGREED TO DEMONSTRATORS' DEMANDS THAT USAID BE DISSOLVED
IMMEDIATELY; THAT AMERICAN USAID EMPLOYEES BE WITHDRAWN
FROM LAOS ALSO IMMEDIATELY; THAT USAID EQUIPMENT BE
TURNED OVER TO PGNU; AND (ALMOST AS AFTERTHOUGHT) THAT
USAID LOCAL EMPLOYEES BE PAID OFF. THEY ASKED IF WE
AGREED TO TAKE THESE STEPS. IF SO, THEY COULD GO TO
USAID COMPOUND AND INFORM DEMONSTRATORS AND DEMONSTRATION
WOULD END. CHARGE REPLIED HE DID NOT HAVE AUTHORITY
TO AGREE AND WOULD HAVE TO ASK FOR INSTRUCTIONS FROM
WASHINGTON. CHARGE ALSO ASKED WHETHER MODALITIES OF
USAID "DISSOLUTION" HAD BEEN WORKED OUT; MINISTERS
CONCEDED THAT CABINET HAD NOT DONE SO.

4. SOTH THEN TELEPHONE PRIME MINISTER. AFTER CON-
SULTATION WITH HIM SOTH SAID THAT THEY WOULD TELL
THE DEMONSTRATORS THAT USAID IN THE PROVINCES
WOULD BE DISBANDED BUT THAT USAID IN VIENTIANE WAS A
MATTER FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO WORK OUT WITH THE U.S. GOVERNMENT.
THE DEMONSTRATORS MIGHT REFUSE TO ACCEPT THIS POSITION.
HOWEVER, WHAT MINISTERS WANTED TO DO AT
THIS TIME WAS TO GO WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE EMBASSY
TO "LIBERATE" THE GUARDS AT USAID#-,,34#-0 , IF THE
DEMONSTRATORS ALLOWED IT, AN EXCHANGE OF GUARDS COULD
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 VIENTI 03579 211536Z

TAKE PLACE. IN ANY CASE, THEIR WEAPONS WOULD HAVE TO
BE DEPOSITED WITH THE JOINT POLICE. CHARGE SAID, IN
THAT CASE, IT WOULD BE BETTER IF THEY DID NOT GO. HE
REVIEWED PROMISES THE PGNU HAD BROKEN SINCE 0130 HOURS,
IN COMPLETE VIOLATION OF EVERY NORM OF CONDUCT BETWEEN
STATES, TO GIVE SECURITY TO AMERICAN DIPLOMATIC PREMISES
AND PERSONNEL.

5. THERE FOLLOWED AN EXCHANGE IN WHICH CHARGE RE-EMPHASIZED BROKEN PROMISES AND MINISTERS MADE PLAIN THAT PGNU HAD NO DESIRE TO INTRODUCE POLICE INTO THE USAID COMPOUND OR TO TRY TO EXPEL THE DEMONSTRATORS. THEIR INSTRUCTIONS WERE SIMPLY TO ALLOW THE AMERICAN GUARDS WITHIN THE BUILDINGS TO LEAVE. THE DEMONSTRATORS HAD AGREED TO THIS. MINISTERS WOULD TRY TO ARRANGE AN EXCHANGE OF GUARDS IF THE DEMONSTRATORS ALLOWED IT.

6. CHARGE THEN TELEPHONED PRIME MINISTER. (WHILE THIS CONVERSATION WENT ON MR. RAMSEY DISCUSSED THE SITUATION IN THE USAID COMPOUND, AT KM 6, AND AT KM 9 WITH THE MINISTERS.) PRIME MINISTER TOLD CHARGE THAT GUARDS SHOULD LEAVE, THEIR GUNS BE TURNED OVER TO THE JOINT POLICE, AND THE JOINT POLICE AND DEMONSTRATORS LEFT TO MAINTAIN SECURITY OF COMPOUND. (CHARGE TOOK OCCASION TO REMIND PRIME MINISTER THAT 1951 AID AGREEMENT REQUIRES THREE MONTHS' NOTICE OF RENUNCIATION BY EITHER PARTY; PRIME MINISTER GRASPED THIS POINT. INCIDENTALLY, HE SOUNDED EXTREMELY WEARY.)

7. AFTER PRELIMINARY CONSULTATION, CHARGE TOLD MINISTERS WE COULD CONSIDER RELIEF OF GUARDS AND TURNOVER OF WEAPONS BUT ONLY IF CROWD STOOD WELL BACK WHILE PROCESS TOOK PLACE. MINISTERS COULD GIVE NO ASSURANCES ON THIS POINT; ONLY AGREEMENT MINISTERS HAD FROM DEMONSTRATORS WAS THAT GUARDS WOULD BE ALLOWED TO LEAVE COMPOUND, AND ALL ELSE WOULD HAVE TO BE NEGOTIATED ON THE SPOT.

8. MEANWHILE, IT WAS ESTABLISHED THAT PROCESS OF RAISING AND THEN LOWERING STEEL GATES AT USAID AND DAO BUILDINGS WOULD TAKE AT LEAST TWELVE MINUTES (GIVING DEMONSTRATORS AMPLE TIME TO RUSH UNPROTECTED ENTRANCES).
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 04 VIENTI 03579 211536Z

CHARGE THEREUPON TOLD MINISTERS THAT EXCHANGE OF GUARDS WAS IMPOSSIBLE. GUARDS WOULD STAY, FOR WE HAD LEARNED FROM DAY'S EXPERIENCE THAT WE COULD NOT PLACE ANY CONFIDENCE IN THE JOINT POLICE. THEY HAVE DONE NOTHING SO FAR.

9. IT WAS FINALLY DECIDED THAT THE MINISTERS WOULD RETURN TO CONSULT THE PRIME MINISTER AND AFTERWARDS WOULD ATTEMPT TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE DEMONSTRATORS AND TO INDUCE THEM TO LEAVE THE COMPOUND. THEY ALSO AGREED TO ORDER THE JOINT MILITARY PROTECTIVE FORCE TO ALLOW THE PEOPLE AT KM 6 TO COME AND GO.

10. COMMENT: NEEDLESS TO SAY, WE SHALL HAVE TO AWAIT DEVELOPMENTS. ONE THING IS PLAIN, AND THAT IS THAT THE

PGNU IS NOT WILLING TO TAKE ANY ACTION AGAINST THE
DEMONSTRATORS. THE MOST THE MINISTERS ENVISAGE IS
NEGOTIATING WITH DEMONSTRATORS.
CHAPMAN

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